Annual Report

on the

Administration of the Bombay Maternity Benefit Act, 1929

For the year ending 30th June 1931

[Price—Anna 1 *or* 1*d*.]

BOMBAY
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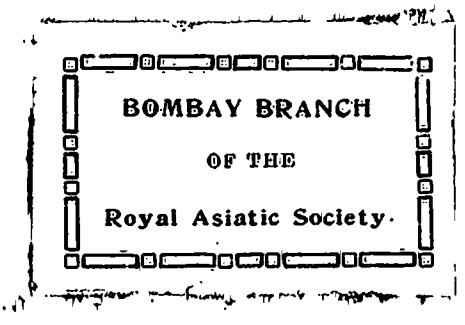

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BOMBAY COLLECTOR'S OFFICE,
FACTORY DEPARTMENT:
2nd October 1931.

From

J. W. SMYTH, ESQ., I.C.S.,
Collector of Bombay;

To

THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,
" Political Department.

Subject.—Annual Report on the working of the Bombay Maternity Benefit Act, 1929, for the year ending 30th June 1931.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward herewith the Annual Report on the working of the Bombay Maternity Benefit Act, 1929, for the year ending 30th June 1931 from the Chief Inspector of Factories. There is nothing in the report that calls for special comment.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
J. W. SMYTH,
Collector of Bombay.

THE BOMBAY MATERNITY BENEFIT ACT, 1929.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING THE 30TH JUNE 1931.

1. Returns were received from 348 of the 353 factories amenable to the Act. The 5 factories that did not submit information employed very few women and probably did not give a benefit to any woman.

2. There was no change in the arrangements made for the administration of the Act.

3. The information received from the factories has been embodied in the attached statement which shows, for each centre, the average number of women daily employed, the number who claimed benefits and the number of benefits paid to them, the number of persons who were paid benefits owing to the deaths of the mothers, and the cost and percentage of the benefits granted.

The number of benefits granted was 5,231 and the cost was Rs. 1,21,325. In the previous year, 1,700 benefits costing Rs. 34,663 were given. It is obvious therefore that knowledge of the Act is now very widely diffused and that the women are freely availing themselves of the privileges conferred by it.

4. The claims paid per 100 women in Bombay, Ahmedabad and Sholapur were 6·1, 18·1 and 13·5 respectively. These may be taken as a fair reflex of the claims paid in the textile industries in the three centres. Employment was more regular in Ahmedabad than in Bombay and there are fewer migrations to the villages from Ahmedabad than from Bombay. Despite these factors however, it is thought that the birth rate amongst textile women in Ahmedabad is considerably higher than in Bombay.

5. The maximum benefit that may be earned is Rs. 24-8-0. The average benefit paid last year was Rs. 20-6-0, whereas in the year under review, it amounted to Rs. 23-3-0. This indicates that the women are availing themselves to a greater extent of the pre-confinement relief period. Cases still arise of women working almost up to the date of confinement, but these appear to be due to bad estimating on the part of the women. Most women take a longer rest than that assumed in the Act, and in an enquiry into this in 6 Bombay mills the average pre-confinement period off work was found to be 48 days.

6. The Act has been of very great assistance to working women, and a greater use is being made of maternity homes. It has, on the whole, worked smoothly, and this is, in great measure, due to the attitude of the employers in the large factories who have been guided more by the spirit than the letter of the law. The small employer has not been as liberal and it is thought that some women in the smaller factories do not receive benefits when earned. Special attention however has been given to them by the Lady Inspector of Factories to ensure that

the provisions of the Act are understood by the female employees. The choice in such concerns often lies between receiving a transitory benefit or losing employment.

7. The Act has not led to any appreciable displacement of female labour in the large factories, but the prosecution of claims in some of the smaller concerns would undoubtedly lead to the dismissal of women of child-bearing age and their replacement by young persons, or by women unlikely to involve the employer in expense. In such concerns the wisest course appears to be to ensure that the women are acquainted with their rights and to take up any claims that are formulated by them.

8. A few cases were noticed where benefits were being paid at a rate lower than that provided by the Act or where reduced benefits resulted from an incorrect interpretation of the "week". Remedies however were promptly made and back differences paid to the women concerned. The Inspector also successfully represented the claims of women who had earned benefits in a concern that went into liquidation.

9. It is widely considered that the Act has led to a reduction in labour turnover and from this point of view it has benefited the employer. In one large mill for example 50 per cent. more women worked throughout the year than had previously been the case.

10. The provisions of the Act have been recently extended to the districts of East and West Khandesh, Sholapur, Dharwar, Thana and Kaira and to the City of Poona by Government Notification No. 8178 dated 26th May 1931 in the Political Department.

11. Representations have been received from employers in certain areas that the flat rate of 8 annas per day applicable throughout the Presidency is unsuitable to their localities.

T. W. JOHNSTONE,

Factory Inspection Office,
Bombay, 18th September 1931.

Chief Inspector of Factories,
Bombay Presidency.

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on 01 February, 2020

Statement accompanying the Administration Report on the working of the Bombay Maternity Benefit Act, 1929, for the year ending June 1931.

Town or District	Average number of women employed daily	Number of women who claimed maternity benefits, section 6 (*1*)	Number of women who were paid maternity benefits for actual births	Number of other persons who were paid maternity benefits, section 7	Total amount of maternity benefit paid	Claims paid per 100 women employed	Claims paid per 100 women employed in the year ending 30th June 1930	Remarks
					Rs. a. p.			
Bombay	30,670	2,151	1,850	23	42,165 8 0	6·1	1·85	
Bombay Suburban ..	2,336	253	240	1	5,381 6 0	10·3	5·4	
Ahmedabad	12,825	2,684	2,320	8	55,274 8 0	18·1	4·6	
Sholapur	4,061	601	548	3	13,118 14 0	13·5	7·7	
Viramgaum	309	21	13	..	259 8 0	4·2	....	
Surat	235	30	·32	..	746 8 0	13·6	1·35	
Broach	401	51	38	1	879 0 0	9·7	....	
Jalgaon	278	18	16	..	257 0 0	5·7	1·6	
Belgaum	18	....	....	..	....	....	....	
Amalner	279	49	46	..	1,108 0 0	16·4	3·85	
Karachi	538	105	91	1	2,135 8 0	17·1	1·22	
Total ..	51,950	5,963	5,194	37	1,21,325 12 0	10·06	3·15	

Factory Inspection Office,
Old Custom House, Fort,
Bombay, 18th September 1931.

T. W. JOHNSTONE,
Chief Inspector of Factories,
Bombay Presidency.

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